THE DAILY ASTORIAN

134th YEAR, No. 174 FRIDAY, MARCH 2, 2007 50 CENTS

Job Corps sets style for Relay for Life fundraising

The Daily Astorian

Tongue Point Job Corps Center recently got an early start raising money for Relay for Life, an annual summer event that benefits cancer research.

At a fundraiser targeting young female students at the center, local stylists took a break from their salons and donated their time and materials to offer workshops on healthy living, providing information on manicures, pedicures, skin and haircare, clothing advice and makeup application. Participants then watched a movie.

"Being Job Corps, a career training organization, we wanted to weave in an educational aspect to the event," said Nikkol Nagle, Business and Community Liaison at the local Job Corps center. "The stylists coming in to donate their time and expertise will help reinforce the significance appearance makes in job interviews and making a good first impression."

Stylists came from the Columbia River Day Spa, Beautiful Dreamer and Paul Mitchell The School. Mary Kay representatives also donated time and materials. Ross and Salon Boheme donated some supplies.

Submitted photos

From left, Nicole Snyder, Michelle Guevara and Pauletta Morrison at Tongue Point Job Corps Center's recent Relay for Life fundraiser.

Cynthia Ornelas tries out some makeup at Tongue Point Job Corps Center for an early benefit for Relay for Life.

About 60 tickets were sold to students – or to staff to reward good behavior and academic achievements. Nagle said the local Job Corps center will hold a series of benefits leading up to the relay. Next up may be an event similar to the "Movies & A Makeover," but for men, she said.

"The goal of the benefit is to raise awareness and funds for the American Cancer Society Relay for Life," said Nagle, who is also a Relay for Life team leader. "We want to get students and staff excited about the relay, and help them see by getting involved they can make a difference in cancer survivors' lives."

Clatsop County's 2007 Relay for Life will be in July.

RIGHT: Eman Santana, right, works on Lindsay Luke at "Movie & A Makeover," at the Tongue Point Job Corps Center Relay for Life fundraiser.

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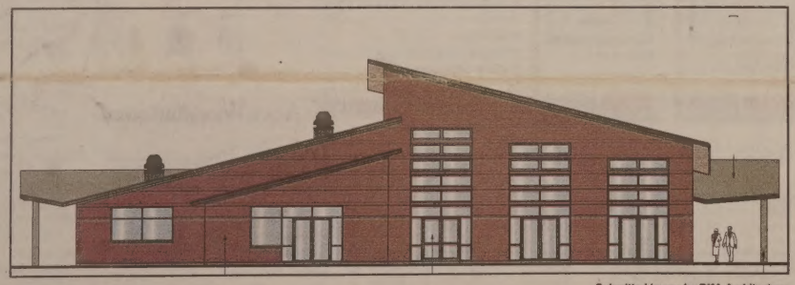
New culinary arts center is in the oven

LORI ASSA — The Daily Astorian

Construction workers test pilings that will support the state-of-the-art, 17,000 square-foot culinary arts building at Tongue Point Job Corps Center Tuesday.

Tongue Point Job Corps starts construction of its biggest project ever

By KARA HANSEN
The Daily Astorian



Submitted image by DKA Architecture

One view of the new culinary arts and dining facility planned at Tongue Point Job Corps Center.

Most days, students in the Tongue Point Job Corps Center's culinary arts program surround their instructor as he slaves over the grill to demonstrate the latest in food preparation.

Soon they'll do it themselves.

Administrators hope culinary arts training at the one-time U.S. Navy base will rival the esteemed programs of Western Culinary Institute by next summer, with modern features such as instructional mirrors, individual work stations and computers for research.

Workers started construction of the 17,000-square-foot building – a long-awaited $4.5 million project – in July.

"This is going to benefit students because it's going to give them the same training they would get at a very high-priced culinary school," said Nancy Pyburn, Tongue Point Job Corps Center director. The current building, "is a make-do facility that's been making do for a long time."

A facilities evaluation in 2000 first identified the need for improvement, said Ron Airing, the center's finance and administration director. The U.S. Department of Labor granted the money last year.

"There hasn't been a project this big at Tongue Point for the 40 years it's been open," Airing said. And most of the buildings have existed longer than the local Job Corps center. They were built for the Navy in the late 1930s. "The Department of Labor is continuing to invest in Tongue Point to keep it a state-of-the-art facility."

The federally funded job-training and education program annually enrolls about 65,000 people nationwide, mostly economically disadvantaged youths, to learn about industries such as culinary arts, health occupations, construction and seamanship.

Tongue Point's 500 students live in dorms and eat for free at the campus dining hall, part of the culinary arts facility. The cafeteria often becomes congested, said Airing, and staff members also eat there. The new building should eliminate much of the bottleneck and could decrease the number of necessary lunch periods, he said. Right now, students eat meals in two shifts.

> ***The new building will also bring the center in line with Job Corps' preferred food-court model.***

"Once we get the new facility up and operating we may be able to reduce that," Airing said. "That would add time to the training day for the students, which is why they're here – to get training."

The new building will also bring the center in line with the Job Corps' preferred food-court model, he said, with individual tables distributing various items.

"That kind of frees up the whole area and really helps with the flow of the student population to be able to go through the serving area," he said. "Also, it's a lot more pleasant environment to be getting your food in, instead of standing in a long line."

But equally important, Airing said, is the new facility's ability to offer cutting-edge training to students working toward jobs in food service.

See **CORPS**, *Page 10A*

Corps: The class's 20 to 24 trainees will each have a grill and station to work at

Continued from Page 1A

Students in the culinary arts program start with basic food preparation and learn to use kitchen tools and equipment, moving on to more advanced cooking styles and French techniques. They also learn the business side of the industry, costing out ingredients, materials and labor. And they study food handling and workplace sanitation.

The program is now between directors. But chef Michael Geurds, who recently took a job in Colorado, played a large part in designing the new facility, said Nikkol Nagle, the Job Corps center's business and community liaison.

"He met with the architect's kitchen designer and recommended that the plans include the individual workstations and the mirror," Nagle said. "He basically modeled it after Western Culinary Institute. He gave a ton of feedback on the plans and how things should be laid out to be the best educational environment for the students."

The class's 20 to 24 trainees will each have a grill and station to work at, copying the head chef via an instructional mirror. When not cooking, they will be able to research recipes on the Internet with new computer stations – the current facility has one, but it's mainly used by the instructor, according to staff.

The sprawling, single-floor brick building will triple the culinary arts program's space. The dining hall, also expanded, will offer a Columbia River view. It will benefit students across all programs as well as the overall community, according to the center.

Students in vocations such as landscaping and construction will have a hand in the project. And community members dining at the program's Bistro will have a much more "desirable" place to do it, said Pyburn, the center's director.

The old space will be used for storage, administrators said, but could eventually offer a more convenient location for student health and wellness services, now located near the center's entrance, farther from the campus dorms.

Of more than 100 Job Corps centers nationwide, Tongue Point last year ranked 12th for student success, based on students' jobs, wages and follow-up interviews once they've finished the program. The new culinary arts facility could earn the local center a higher grade, Pyburn said.

"A student can't be a success here at Job Corps if they don't like being here," she said. "And if a student is well-trained, they're going to get a better job, better wages, and they're going to keep it.

"The better their training, the better their chance is to be successful."

Sheila Estes, Jacqueline Gollnick, Aydan Estes

Students who became staff!

Liz Gomez

Submitted photo

Liz Mateo Gomez, left, is pictured after a Clatsop County Commission on Children and Families Youth Recognition Awards banquet.

Gomez made you laugh, made you cry

"Liz Mateo Gomez had a way of touching you."

That's what Tara Constantine remembered about the Tongue Point Job Corps student who came to help out with the Safe Kids car seat clinic last year.

"She always had a smile on her face," said Constantine. As North Coast coordinator for Safe Kids, Constantine has worked with many Tongue Point students. "She was the one that stood out," she said.

b. 1991

Helping out wherever she was needed, translating between Spanish and English, Gomez was a young woman with a bright future.

With her roots in Guatemala, Gomez came to Tongue Point from Beaverton. She entered the business and finance program at the center and was a good student. In spite of her youth, she soon became president of her dorm.

"She was nice, outgoing, fun to be around," remembered Charles Stromvall, a fellow student at the center. "She made you laugh, she made you cry," he said.

Gomez received a Youth Recognition Award from the Clatsop County Commission on Children and Families for overcoming the personal challenges in her life and continuing to strive for a positive future.

Liz Mateo Gomez died in January 2008. She was a passenger in a car which was in a head-on collision on U.S. Highway 26 on her way back to Tongue Point. She was 17.

-- Julia Mabry

Joyce Williams
1919 - 2008

"Absolute identity with one's cause is the first and great condition of successful leadership."
—Woodrow Wilson

With respect and appreciation for their contributions to the community.

Senator
Betsy Johnson
P.O. Box R Scappoose, OR 97056 (503) 543-4046

Seamanship was in Nelson's blood

John Edward Nelson loved the sea, just like his father. Nelson's father -- a seaman, born and raised in Norway -- was one of the first pilots to pass a ship through the Panama Canal.

The father passed his tales of the sea down to his son. Nelson loved to hear his father talk about the sea.

Nelson listened carefully, and in 1944, at 16 years old, he joined the U.S. Merchant Marine. He worked on the Liberty Ships -- unarmored World War II cargo ships carrying troops and cargo around the world.

"He had three ships shot out from under him," said Patrick Albers, director of the Seamanship Program at Tongue Point. "They were the easiest targets for Japan and Germany."

b. 1928

Nelson also sailed during the Korean and Vietnam wars. He sailed to Europe with Marshall Plan Aid.

After he retired from the Sailors Union of the Pacific, Nelson sailed on tugboats.

Judy Nelson, his daughter-in-law, said Nelson began working on tugs ferrying cargo back and forth from the mouth of the Columbia River to Lewiston, Idaho.

"But that wasn't his love -- he loved being at sea," she said.

She said Nelson was always the "encourager."

"He told other guys they could do it," Judy Nelson said. "He said there'd be times when there'd be guys out there who hated it. He told them, 'If you don't love it, find another career.'"

In 1980, Nelson helped his best friend, Capt. Jack Newbold, begin the Seamanship Program at Tongue Point. The program began as a deckhand program for the tug and barge industry.

The first class had eight or 10 students.

"They started out with nothing," Albers said. "John told me when they first started they had six chairs and six brooms. They lined up the chairs and practiced our commands."

Judy Nelson said her father-in-law loved turning young men's lives around at Tongue Point. He appreciated that those who made it through the program had a career to look forward to.

Julie Rhoads, an engineer in the program, said Tongue Point is the legacy in Nelson's career.

"The kids just loved him. They respected everything he said because he was so knowledgeable," she said.

As it grew, the Seamanship Program acquired a number of vessels. Nelson retired again in 1993.

He spent winters in Spain. He loved to travel and visited 93 countries before he died.

Rhoads said he loved to take cruises because he loved to be pampered. And he used to keep a map of the world with pins in all the places he'd been.

Even though he enjoyed being pampered, Nelson was known for his drive to take care of himself.

He watched his good friend Newbold fight cancer and fight to have the right to die with dignity. He saw Newbold die of bone cancer in 2005.

"(Nelson) was very determined to take care of himself," Judy Nelson said. "He did say, 'When you're out to sea you fend for yourself because nobody's going to take care of you.'"

Rhoads said that even when he was sick with bone cancer -- the same that took his friend's life shortly before -- he traveled everywhere.

Judy Nelson said her father-in-law would walk along Astoria's Riverwalk every day, and enjoyed talking about the city's long history. He died in February 2008.

"He traveled the world, but the Pacific Northwest was his favorite," she said. "He loved Astoria."

-- Joe Gamm

The Daily Astorian file

John Nelson looks over a picture of himself and Jack Newbold with the 176-foot freighter, the Betsy Ross, in 2005. The photo is shown below.

John Nelson

Submitted photo

Jack Newbold, left, and John Nelson with the Betsy Ross, a ship they obtained for the Tongue Point seamanship program.

Job Corps: Women who complete seamanship programs are snapped up by employers

Continued from Page 1

ship," Dempsey says. "It must have been lonely for Lisa ... You're often expected to be one of the boys."

Close says growing up with six brothers aided her inclusion into the group.

"The guys look at me as being one of them," she says.

After two years in the program, she passed a test for an Able Bodied Seaman certificate, which will certify her skills as a deck hand. She has also earned her General Educational Development certificate and high school diploma. She says she can't wait to apply for a job with the Military Sealift Command, which transports items for the department of defense.

"I don't always have to be on land," she says, with anticipation. "It's a freedom in a way."

Students in the seamanship program can also learn engineering and test for Qualified Member of the Engine Department. Olivia Reselap, 19, joined Tongue Point five months ago and says she would like to train for both certificates. She would like to be a captain on a deep-sea ship some day.

Reselap says although she was a little intimidated in the beginning, she views the male students as big brothers.

Kachele Meyer, 19, would like to work on deep-sea ships as well. She joined Job Corps to escape life in the small town of Fall City, Wash., about 40 miles east of Seattle.

"I like to do hard labor," she says. "It's about the only thing I'm good at."

Seamanship student Derek Zirkle, 21, says during his two years in the program, he noticed the women worked just as hard as their male crew mates.

"At first, they do have trouble with manual labor," he says. "In general, they do a really good job."

Albers says because of their limited strength, women find creative ways to do the same job.

"A guy might throw his back out to be macho," he says.

But a former female student used leverage and momentum to "toss oars with the rest of the guys," he says.

Because she's smaller, 5-foot-5-inch Close says she can "cram in a little hole" that a guy couldn't squeeze into. Reselap says her small hands allow her to do work men can't do.

"I've really got the painting down," says the 5-foot-2-inch woman.

However, Albers says that small men confront the same handicaps women do.

"You're all sailors," he advises the students. "You're not a boy sailor or a girl sailor. You're a sailor."

Being a sailor

When students complete the 2-year Tongue Point program, they usually have more than 200 days at sea and 2,000 hours of instruction, he says. Instructors take the ships out once or twice per week and for week-long trips a few times per year. Students often work as paid interns aboard ships, cleaning up oil or hazardous waste spills.

While classroom work is valuable, Albers says many concepts can't be taught on a blackboard.

"There's nothing like taking them out on the ship and showing them what it really is," he says.

Although Tongue Point instructors teach the basic material, students learn much more out on the sea and often attend community college or university classes as they develop in their careers.

Initially, 95 percent of seamanship graduates find jobs, which often pay $15 per hour and frequently much more, Albers says.

"If an individual wants a job, I can pretty much guarantee them one," he says.

Inlandboatmen's Union secretary and treasurer Terri Mast says industry-wide hiring reductions decades ago caused about 50 percent of current workers to be 45 years or older. Mast says about one-third of her union members are women, but she says other industry jobs have fewer women, like aboard deep-sea shipping vessels.

"We are facing a real skills shortage in our industry," Mast says.

Learning the knots

Tongue Point seamanship students must be 17½ to 24 years old to enroll. People can also study for the Able Bodied Seaman certificates at community colleges or universities throughout the country, including Clatsop Community College's Maritime and Environmental Research and Training Station, Inc. Tongue Point partners with M.E.R.T.S. in basic safety training, said M.E.R.T.S. instructor Bill Antilla.

At M.E.R.T.S., students can also train to be ordinary deck hands, but

LORI ASSA — The Daily Astorian

Instructor Pat Albers helps Christopher Yockman, a 22-year-old who has been in the seamanship vocation for nine months, navigate the channel.

Women in Tongue Point's seamanship program break into a male-dominated field

7/30/02

By JENNIFER COLLINS
The Daily Astorian

Lisa Close clings to a tugboat's railing. Her feet make tiny, impatient bounces.

"Wait. Wait a minute," instructor Patrick Albers directs from a window. Close stands almost taller than the tugboat's wheel house as it inches toward a pier.

"OK, go," Albers says, like a father permitting his daughter to go to a dance – permitting her to grow up.

Close spans the open air to the pier then scrambles over the wooden boards. Hand-over-hand, she hauls 6-inch-thick ropes to the bit, a post that secures the boat to the dock.

The 24-year-old woman will graduate from Astoria's Tongue Point Job Corps seamanship program Aug. 9. The first woman since 1997 to complete the program, Close is also one of the first women to participate in a graduation ceremony for Tongue Point's seamanship – the only seamanship program at a Job Corps center nationwide.

"I'm trying to break all the rules, here," she says.

Close is one of three women in the program of 53 people. In the last three years, 108 students enrolled to learn to be a deckhand or engine room worker and 65 completed it. Only one of those was a woman.

Seamanship is one of 17 vocations offered at Tongue Point, which is supported by the Department of Labor and operated by Management & Training Corp.

Close joined Job Corps because she "was tired of getting into trouble." She dropped out of high school and never went back for a diploma until she joined Job Corps in May 2000. When she first attended the center, she trained in a business-related vocation, but she soon felt the allure of river – a short walk from the student dormitories.

As the only woman onboard, she worked out heavily in the beginning to improve her strength in the physically demanding job. At times, teasing and challenges from crew mates caused her to question her skill.

"Can you really do this or is it gonna break you down?" she remembers asking herself. "And it never broke me down. ... I knew I could do it regardless of what they said. ... Then I realized they do that to each other."

Close is becoming part of the group.

Carharts and steel toes

On one trip down the Columbia River, the weather is almost balmy as the tug cruises past the mooring basins and riverfront piers in Astoria. Several crew members are lounging on the tug's bow.

Although she sits with her male crew mates and frequently jokes with them, Close sits facing the water, pensively. She sports Carhart pants and steel-toed boots and hunches over a piece of rope, practicing splicing methods and tying knots.

Columbia River Bar Pilot Deborah Dempsey says women have to give up some of their feminine qualities in the male-dominated field.

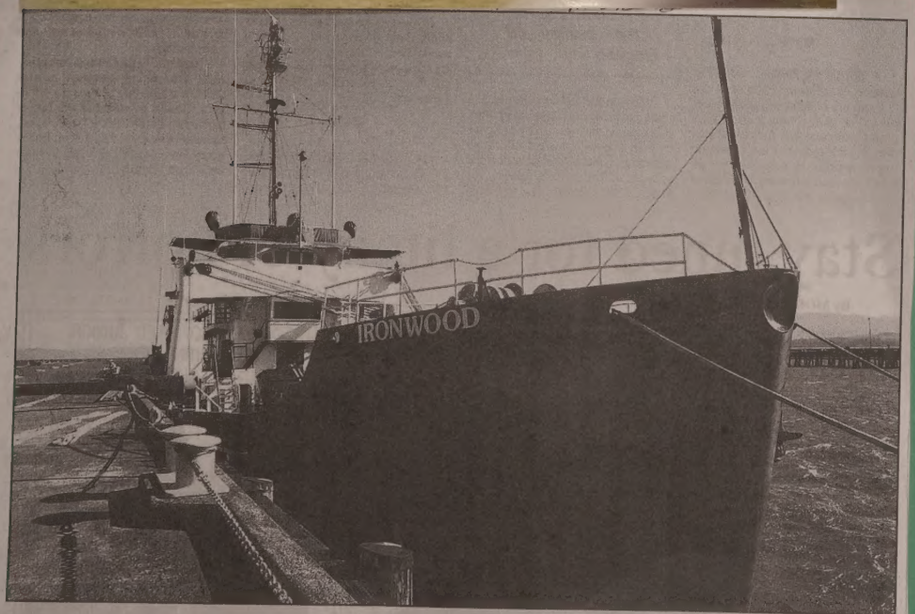
"It's lonely to be the only woman on the

See JOB CORPS, Page 14

ABOVE: Andrew Kaawa, 22, practices handling line, as fellow students in the seamanship vocation offered through the Tongue Point Job Corps Center practice rope tying on the tug.

LEFT: Jeremiah Williams, 21, and Joshua Walker, 25, practice bowline knots on a recent river trip.

LORI ASSA — The Daily Astorian



The Ironwood, a buoy tender, was recently acquired by the Tongue Point Job Corps Center. LORI ASSA — The Daily Astorian

11/13/02

Job Corps receives training vessel

The Daily Astorian

Tongue Point Job Corps Center acquired the Ironwood, a 180-foot buoy tender that was decommissioned from the U.S. Coast Guard in 2000.

A private individual acquired the ship and donated it to the Department of Labor as a tax write-off. The Department of Labor passed the boat on to Job Corps, which is part of the department.

Tongue Point Job Corps operates the only seamanship training program in Job Corps. It operates two ships, two tugs, several smaller vessels and a barge.

The Ironwood, built in 1944, served at several locations throughout the country, including Alaska. The Ironwood was upgraded more frequently than Tongue Point's cargo ship the Betsy Ross, also built in 1944.

"We've been trying to get a buoy tender to replace the Betsy Ross for years," Seamanship instructor Pat Albers said.

The Coast Guard will certify the Ironwood as a training vessel, a process that could take a few weeks to a few months.

The Ironwood arrived at Tongue Point last month. Coos Bay-based Sause Brothers Ocean Towing transported the ship from Los Angeles to Tongue Point for free.

"If we would have had to pay for it, it would have been $40,000 to tow it up here," Albers said.

Students finishing the program are certified as deckhands or engine room workers. Enrollment is rolling in the program, which usually takes two years to complete. The seamanship program currently serves about 50 students at Tongue Point Job Corps Center.

Walking the straight and narrow

6/7/02

A year ago, Shiela Rogers was working at a McDonald's in Huston, Texas. Now, Rogers, 19, has graduated with the equivalent to her high school diploma from Clatsop Community College.

Sheila has worked hard, resisting the urge to drop out of Job Corps and taking extra classes to get her General Educational Development certificate.

"I'm so proud of myself, too," Sheila said. "I finally did it ... I finally finished something."

Shiela Rogers

When Shiela was 16, she slowly drifted away from school and then dropped all her classes.

"I was hanging out," Shiela said. "At that time it was real fun ... I got real sidetracked."

This September, she will earn her high school diploma from the college and her office technology certificate from Tongue Point Job Corps. She plans to enroll in Clatsop Community College and learn to be a secretary. She will be the first one in her family to graduate.

"I went from being a girl to being a grown woman," she said. "Before it was like what's gonna satisfy me just in that minute. Now I'm thinking, what's going to help me in the future. I don't want nothing to get in the way of my career."